

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(88) Date of publication A3:
01.10.1997 Bulletin 1997/40

(51) Int Cl.⁶: **G06F 17/60**

(43) Date of publication A2:
21.02.1996 Bulletin 1996/08

(21) Application number: **95305364.2**

(22) Date of filing: **01.08.1995**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
BE CH DE ES FR GB IT LI NL

(30) Priority: **10.08.1994 US 288577**

(71) Applicant: **Fisher Scientific Company**
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-4785 (US)

(72) Inventors:
 • **Johnson, James M.**
Bridgeville, PA 15017 (US)

• **Kinross, Robert P.**
Ben Avon, PA 15202 (US)
 • **Melly, Francis J.**
Pittsburgh, PA 15232 (US)
 • **Momyer, Douglas A.**
Upper St. Clair, PA 15241 (US)

(74) Representative: **Ayers, Martyn Lewis Stanley et al**
J.A. KEMP & CO.
14 South Square
Gray's Inn
London WC1R 5LX (GB)

(54) **Electronic sourcing system and method**

(57) An electronic sourcing system includes a computer that maintains a catalog database of data including product information (such as product identification and descriptive information) relating to catalog items available from vendor product catalogs, and a means for building (generating) a requisition including at least one requisitioned item. Information at least partially identifying an item desired to be requisitioned is entered by a user, and utilized by a means for searching the database for catalog items matching that information and

for selecting at least one catalog item located as a result of the search. Text describing the catalog items, and images of the items, may be viewed. Data identifying selected catalog items are communicated to the requisition building means, which generates a requisition including entries for items corresponding to the selected catalog items. The system checks the availability in one or more inventory locations of the corresponding desired catalog items, and generates one or more purchase orders for desired items from inventory locations stocking the items.

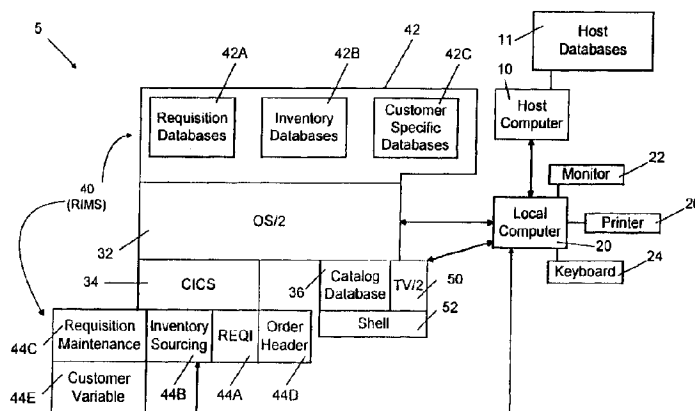


FIG. 1A



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 95 30 5364

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	US 4 992 940 A (DWORKIN ROSS E) 12 February 1991 * column 1, line 63 - column 2, line 56; figures 2A,2B,7 *	1-27	G06F17/60
X	US 5 319 542 A (KING JR JOHN E ET AL) 7 June 1994 * column 5, line 40 - column 6, line 15; claims; figure 3 *	1,24	
A	US 4 972 318 A (BROWN GORDON T ET AL) 20 November 1990 * column 5, line 4 - column 7, line 68; figure 2 *	2-23, 25-27	
A	WO 90 11572 A (EPSTEIN MORRIS) 4 October 1990 * page 19, line 1 - page 27, line 28; figures 2-4 *	1-27	
A	US 4 984 155 A (GEIER RAYMOND R ET AL) 8 January 1991 * column 1, line 5 - column 2, line 25; claims; figure 2 *	1-27	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6) G06F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 29 July 1997	Examiner Fournier, C
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPF FORM 1503 (03.92) (P04C01)